

and her crew, James Kelly, Andrew Thomas, Wendy Lawrence, Charles Camarda, Stephen Robinson, and Soichi Noguchi are piloting the safest, most sophisticated, and most reliable spacecraft ever built.

This successful lift off, NASA's 114th shuttle mission, is a tremendous event. It is important that we remember the dangerous nature of space flight and exploration. As President Ronald Reagan said after the loss of the Space Shuttle *Challenger*, "We've grown used to the idea of space, and perhaps we forget that we've only just begun."

This week, we congratulate the scientists and technicians who are upholding the great traditions of America's space program. We recognize the spirit and courage of the space shuttle's crew. We thank the countless number of East Texans that helped in the search for evidence and answers in the wake of the Space Shuttle *Columbia* tragedy. And finally, we honor the memory of those brave men and women who have gone before in the name of exploration and in the quest for discovery.

HONORING KEVIN BRAGG ON THE COMPLETION OF HIS INTERNSHIP

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the many contributions Kevin Bragg has made while interning in my Washington, DC, office. Kevin has been a wonderful addition to the office and a great servant to the constituents of Tennessee's Sixth Congressional District.

But Kevin must return to Murfreesboro, the hometown we share. This fall, Kevin will begin his senior year at the University of Tennessee, where he is a political science major and a member of the Pi Sigma Alpha honor society.

During his internship, Kevin won over the entire staff with his ever-present eagerness and genuine interest in public affairs. He has attended briefings, addressed constituent concerns and served as a friendly and informative tour guide of the U.S. Capitol, providing visitors from Middle Tennessee with a personalized look at a national treasure.

I hope Kevin has enjoyed his internship as much as my staff and I have enjoyed his presence in the office. I wish him all the best in the future.

THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the importance of the fifteenth anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the ADA. This legislation has played a vital role in ensuring that all Americans are granted the opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of society.

With the bipartisan support of this body and the Senate, President George H.W. Bush

signed the Americans with Disabilities Act as a mechanism to ensure that "every man, woman and child with a disability can now pass through once closed doors into a bright new era of equality, independence, and freedom."

Thanks to the ADA, we have taken significant steps towards the achievement of that goal. The Act required educational facilities to become accessible to those in wheelchairs, opening the doors to learning and opportunity for thousands of Americans. It ensured the availability of transit, entertainment, and communications systems to the hearing-impaired and the blind, guaranteeing them an opportunity to participate in cultural events, media events, and public engagements.

The ADA has substantially moved this country forward in terms of our relationship with a group of Americans who had once been unfairly excluded for their physical abilities. We have taken important steps to increase the opportunities and lower the barriers to the equal and just treatment of all Americans. We have opened doors through the ADA for the full participation and contribution of individuals to our society.

Despite the efforts of the last decade and a half, we still have further to go. We still have more work to do to assist our citizens with disabilities. Today, approximately two-thirds of people with disabilities of working age are still unemployed. While many factors influence the high rate of unemployment for the disabled, a third of non-workers with disabilities reported their need for some type of accommodation as a major factor in their unemployment. An interesting aspect of this is their requests are minor accommodations—elevators, closer accessible parking, and special worksite features modifications that are not particularly expensive to make, especially with advance planning.

Likewise, proposed cuts in housing, assistance technology, training, and other assistance programs threaten to undo many of the advances we have made in the last 15 years to help those with disabilities.

Whether it is the costs involved or the unwillingness to reach out to this brave segment of our national workforce, people with disabilities are still discouraged from opening some doors of opportunity. They still need more assistance in their fight for justice.

I encourage the Members of this chamber, as well as citizens and employers across the country, to pursue reinvigorated efforts at ensuring that every man, woman, and child is afforded an opportunity to success. Let us find ways to help every citizen build a better life as we create the conditions for a better America.

THANK YOU, BONNIE RINALDI

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Bonnie Rinaldi. Bonnie recently retired from the position of Henderson's Assistant City Manager on July 14th, and will be sorely missed by all.

Bonnie's public service spanned almost 30 years, starting as an intern in North Las Vegas. Since her intern days, Bonnie served

in many aspects of city government, including assistant city manager for Clark County, before accepting the position of Assistant City Manager for Henderson in 1999.

I have known Bonnie for many years and consider her a good friend. I have also tremendously enjoyed working with her. Her intelligence and personality made her a strong and effective leader throughout Southern Nevada. Those who worked with Bonnie sometimes referred to her as "the little engine that could," skipping from meeting to meeting without missing a beat. Bonnie's life philosophy is that, with some determination and hard work, anything could be accomplished—a quality that will continue to take her far in life.

I wish Bonnie the best of luck in her retirement. It will be hard to imagine the City of Henderson without her.

HONORING CHRISTOPHER TATUM ON THE COMPLETION OF HIS INTERNSHIP

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Christopher Tatum for his service during his internship this summer. Chris is a resident of Gallatin, Tennessee, and he has been a tremendous help to my constituents in Tennessee's Sixth Congressional District.

Chris is returning home to prepare for his junior year at the University of Mississippi. As he finishes his experience in Washington, he already is looking toward the next adventure—studying in Italy during the fall semester.

Chris's remarkable attitude and eagerness have served him well as he has experienced the many facets of Congress first-hand. He has been very helpful in answering constituent concerns, guiding visitors through the U.S. Capitol and assisting me and my staff with countless projects.

I hope Chris has enjoyed this learning experience as much as we have enjoyed having him in the office. I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

THE STRUGGLES OF DAMU SMITH

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring to the attention and consciousness of this body the important and significant battles of a courageous warrior for justice, peace, and equality, Mr. Damu Smith. Damu has been a constant and consistent champion of peace and continues his fight for love and justice despite his struggle with cancer. I applaud this simple man, this mighty activist, and this concerned citizen of the world for his tireless struggle to make the world a better place. I encourage him to continue his fight, knowing that others are aware of his struggle and continue to need his leadership.

A passionate believer in peace and global peace movements, Damu has fought to raise the awareness of the world community of the

ugliness of apartheid in South America, the brutality of government injustice and gun violence, the need for environmental awareness and justice, and the international fights against racism, injustice, and discrimination. He has advocated peace instead of nuclear arms. He has sought reconciliation rather than violence. He has battled intolerance in lieu of understanding.

A mere perusal of his life story would demonstrate to any of us that Damu has been a consistent champion of peace and justice wherever hatred and injustice reside. His humanitarianism knows few limits and his sense of person responsibility is not bound by social expectations.

Damu, this champion of justice and peace, nonetheless is currently waging a battle with cancer. I wish him well in his persistent fight against the disease.

I hope the struggle of Damu Smith does not go unnoticed by my colleagues in this body. I hope we see the challenges and struggles that face our relentless pursuers of peace, justice, and equality. I hope we take steps to prevent Damu's struggle from being repeated on future generations of Americans. While he is a true fighter to the core, Damu's struggle has not been easy. Yet he continues to persist in his advocacy of peace and justice.

What is more disturbing about Damu's case is that there appears to be both genetic and environmental causes behind his disease: A family history and a location in "Cancer Alley"—a small section of Louisiana with a number of industrial plants and facilities and high rates of cancer, lung conditions, and skin irritations. It would seem that the Congress could do more to address whether there is a correlation between these incidence and the industrial population of the community.

I nonetheless praise the continued struggle of this fighter for justice and warrior for peace. I submit the following article written by Shantella Y. Sherman of the Afro-American highlighting Damu's struggle and his fight. I thank Ms. Sherman for bringing this to the Nation's attention.

FAITH AND DELIVERANCE: DAMU SMITH WAGES WAR ON CANCER

Damu Smith's name bounces around rooms with the same quiet reverence often reserved for more popularly known figures: Nelson Mandela or Desmond Tutu. Sometimes, there's a knowing smile or two. Smith is a kind of modern-day superstar among activists: fierce, passionate, courageous, God-fearing. His celebrity has reached far and beyond Washington, D.C., into the far corners of the Earth. Where there is any semblance of injustice, rest assured, Damu Smith is planning strategic countermoves.

Smith's activism rallied civic consciousness against apartheid in South Africa, gun violence, police brutality and government injustice. He worked to effect peace and a freeze on nuclear weapons, and advocated for environmental justice, both in America and abroad. In fact, Smith was in Palestine, heading up a delegation of protest against unfair treatment suffered by Palestinians at the hands of the Israeli government, when he collapsed, subsequently being diagnosed with colon cancer.

As a result, Smith has always appeared larger than life, particularly to this reporter, who met him more than 20 years ago as a pre-teen. Interviewing Smith became a challenge that 15 years of reporting experience couldn't overcome. I was nervous. I wasn't sure what to expect, so I stood outside his

apartment door for a solid five minutes, willing each knock to become just a little more audible to him on the other side. Finally, I entered at his behest, "Come on in, the door is open."

Once I'd taken off my shoes and peered around the corner, I was able to get a full glance at Damu. His eyes were bright, his skin flawless and his smile brighter than ever. He bustled around his apartment with a small contingent of associates: his friend and doctor of more than 30 years, Jewel L. Crawford; a friend from St. Louis; and others who came and went in fluid motions.

There is a handwritten note attached to a hand-carved mirror, one of the many African treasures decorating Damu's home. Above a litany of daily affirmations, is written, "With God All Things Are Possible." All along, Damu answered questions and telephone calls, gave directions to Dulles International Airport, passed out fresh juice and (laughed).

Dr. Crawford answered my question and confusion without me asking: "Damu approached his disease the same as he does everything in his life. He's a fighter, and he's getting stronger because of his faith."

Crawford would know. She was one of the first people Smith spoke with following his hospital admission. While Crawford says she cannot be certain of how cancer struck Smith, she is certain he will beat it.

"Damu has a family predisposition to this type of cancer: His paternal grandmother and his father both had it. It's hard to put a definite on it, because even though Damu is a vegetarian, never smoked [and] never drank, he was in one of the most toxic areas on the planet for an extended period of time. Being in Louisiana all that time could have been the element that pushed him over into being affected," said Crawford.

The area Crawford referred to is known as "Cancer Alley," a small section of Convent, LA., where a smorgasbord of industrial plant run-off brought on cancers, lung conditions and skin irritations among residents. In the early 1990s, Smith led an all-out campaign against the Japanese owners of the Shintech plants, and lived with some of the area's residents.

Smith himself agrees that living in a toxic environment could be the culprit in the development of cancers, including his own, but says the family factor should not be overlooked.

"The air we breathe, the water we drink, the foods we eat and the homes in which we live are toxic. This is a very toxic environment we live in this millennium. I live a healthy lifestyle: I don't drink, don't smoke, never did an illegal drug. I'm a vegetarian and I eat organic food. And yet, I end up with colon cancer. Why? Could be a number of things," he surmised.

"Could be the toxic environment, could be the fact that within my family there's a genetic marker of colon cancer. My father died of it. My grandmother, his mother, had it. She didn't die from it, but she had it. So, according to conventional medical doctors, I'm at greater risk because I have this family marker," said Smith.

Though he says he should have seen a doctor regularly, like most minorities, he didn't make it a top priority, especially since he was so health-conscious.

"I should have been at the doctor every year getting checked. I wasn't. I have to be honest with you, I used to think about going to get a checkup and I'd say to myself, 'I don't want to find out anything bad. I just can't imagine anything bad happening to me because I eat so well.' I used to say that stuff. So, this is one of the things I want to be a poster child for: getting screened and checked for colon cancer," said Smith.

But how does a poster child maintain in the fight for his life? According to Smith, with an unwavering conviction in God.

"First of all, I have to have faith in God—in a higher power, greater than us. And so, that's the most important thing to me, having faith in God and knowing that he can deliver me from this," said Smith.

"I was told by one of the doctors when I was initially diagnosed at the end of March that people in my condition, statistically, have only three to six months to live. And he made it a point of saying to me twice during our conversation, 'Don't hesitate about anything.' That was Easter Sunday morning of this year. I had to really reflect on that."

Doctors also informed Smith that his liver was three-quarters full of tumors—a condition that effectively made the illness terminal. After going through what he called "about 30 minutes of anguish and seeing my whole life race in front of me like a video clip," Smith announced he was fighting it.

"There are a lot of people out there, when they hear that, allegedly, they have only three months, six months, a few days or a few weeks to live, they plan their lives accordingly. I plan to be here for several more years, and I'm thinking in that direction," said Smith.

The reality of death is all the more gripping because he lost a close friend to colon cancer around Christmas. Unlike his friend, who went in for surgery and passed a few days later without a moment to prepare, Smith said he is grateful for the opportunity to fight for his life.

"Here I am. I've been alive three months since I was told, and I'm feeling great right now. Those tumors are shrinking. I'm sitting here with you now doing this interview and drinking this organic kale and carrot juice, and I am drinking it as much as possible because it heals the liver . . . I'm taking chemotherapy, acupuncture, sound healing, breathology, everything in the toolbox of healing. I'm picking up and using on my body right now. And I'm keeping God at the center of everything. So, I don't plan to lose."

Smith is only human, and is clear about what his body is going through. He says that having a clear understanding of his body's day-to-day function and how to improve those functions while his body is under attack is essential. Even this though, he says, takes a back seat to faith.

"I'm also a very practical person. I understand that I have a very serious disease occupying my body, but I'm claiming victory! . . . I am expelling that disease from my body by having faith in God and having faith in my family and the community of angels who have descended upon me and who surround me now," he said.

Still, others wonder why Smith would make such a personal struggle public. The answer for Smith is an echoed sentiment understood by everyone who encounters him. He wouldn't be Damu Smith if he wasn't helping out the next man—even during his own crisis.

"So many people hide what's wrong with them and stuff, and he was open and went public with it so that he could possibly help someone else," said Crawford. "Even facing a life-threatening situation, Damu is [still] organizing and trying to touch someone else's life."

"When I was lying in the bed at Providence Hospital once I returned from Palestine in late March, I decided that I had to, one, walk publicly in this journey of healing [and], two, that I had to organize people to help me and organize people to help others understand that they don't want to go through what I was about to go through.

"There were literally hundreds of people who came to see me at Providence Hospital,

and some of my friends were getting upset, saying I needed my rest. But I knew what I was doing. God knew what I was doing. I needed to organize my friends and family first, and I told them that we've got to fight this, because it's not just me. People have to go get checked, and we need to organize around this."

Out of those bedside meetings, Smith was able to establish the Spirit of Hope campaign, which seeks solutions to health disparities among minority and poor Americans. The campaign focuses on universal health care, education about the need for screening measures, addressing astronomical health care costs and promoting general well-being among minority and poor people.

"The whole spectrum of wellness is what the Spirit of Hope campaign is focusing on, and I wouldn't have it any other way. It wouldn't be me if it didn't focus on something other than me," said Smith.

Smith says that despite the cost and fear associated with the procedure, it is imperative that people of color and those living below the poverty line get regular checkups, including colonoscopies.

"What are you going to fear most? [If] you want to live, you cannot fear doing what you have to do to live. Colonoscopies are expensive. They're between \$700 to \$900 dollars. And if you're not insured, that's a major problem. For Black people, and people of color and poor people, that's a major problem."

"It's very important we organize a campaign that insures that everyone has access to effective, holistic, comprehensive, prevention health care and access to treatment facilities so they get what they need when they need it," he argued.

Smith is also thinking about access for his 12-year-old daughter Asha, who he lovingly refers to as "Asha Boo-Boo" and the "crown jewel of his life." "I don't want her to go through this. I want her and all of her little friends to get screened when the time is right. So, I have to work for them too," said Smith.

As my time with Smith draws to a close, I begin to wonder if maybe he hadn't been misdiagnosed. The wristband, which resembles a hospital clasp, is in fact a tag from the Essence Music Festival that he's simply neglected to remove. Damu Smith is doing life Damu Smith-style: happy, brilliant and winning the fight.

"This has been one of the happiest times in my life, in the midst of this crisis. Now some people might say, 'How is that possible?' It's possible because I have seen the love come to me in such wonderful ways. I cannot begin to describe how profound, how rich and warm and beautiful the love has been from my family and friends and God. I thank God for this moment and for the chance to fight," said Smith.

IN HONOR OF MICKEY OWEN

HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mickey Owen, who distinguished himself in southwest Missouri by his 16 years of public service and his commitment to improving the lives of young people.

Mickey Owen began his Major League Baseball career in 1937 when he was drafted by the St. Louis Cardinals. Mickey Owen went on to play 13 seasons as a catcher with the

Cardinals, Dodgers, Cubs and Red Sox and was named to the all-star team four times. After Mickey Owen retired from professional baseball in 1954, he started the Mickey Owen Baseball School in Miller, Missouri. Mickey Owen created an environment for young players, focused on improving their skills and enhancing their appreciation for the game he loved. Owen promoted the idea that young players showed more improvement when relaxed and would excel if a non-threatening atmosphere was present. Mickey Owen Baseball School has instructed thousands of young players from around the world since its inception in 1959. Mickey Owen became the sheriff of Greene County, Missouri in 1965, where he honorably served for 16 years.

Mickey Owen's contributions throughout his life and the impact he had on thousands of young lives will not be forgotten.

HONORING AMY TAYLOR ON THE
COMPLETION OF HER INTERNSHIP

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Amy Taylor for her service to Tennessee's Sixth Congressional District while interning in my office. Both Amy and I are proud to call Murfreesboro, Tennessee, home.

Amy will soon begin her senior year at Middle Tennessee State University, where she is an English major. She is a member of the Kappa Delta sorority and a radio personality on the local jazz station.

Amy was a tremendous help and a wonderful addition to my office. She helped address constituent concerns, assisted me and my staff with numerous projects, and served as a friendly and informative tour guide of the U.S. Capitol, providing visitors from middle Tennessee with a personalized look at a national treasure.

I trust that Amy enjoyed her whirlwind internship and her first-hand examination of the workings of Congress. I know I enjoyed her fresh perspective and enthusiasm during her time here. I wish her all the best in the future.

HARLEM WEEK 2005: THE LEGACY
CONTINUES

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 31st anniversary of a series of festivities honoring the wonders of Harlem, my home community which I am privileged to represent in the Congress. Harlem Week 2005 is a cultural, educational, and entertaining series of activities designed to highlight the history, traditions, and future of the Harlem community that has grown from its modest beginnings to become a major attraction for the residents of the community and thousands of visitors annually.

A lifelong resident of Harlem, I have long been proud of the many facets of my community. From the music and arts of the Harlem

community to the politics and strategies of Harlem's activists and leaders, this is a community that is rich in diversity, entertainment, culture, and love. It is a community that embraces its differences and its commonalities in order to represent the rainbow of beauty and culture that characterizes our great city of New York.

Harlem Week is a celebration of this embrace. It is a time for the community and the families that make up that community to come together, to be exposed to their variety of traditions and customs, and to affirm their individual identities as well as their American consciousness. This community will always, in my mind, represent the essence of America. And, during Harlem Week, we pay tribute to the soul of America.

Harlem Week is not simply a series of festivities and parties. It is an educational experience where individuals are taught to appreciate the arts and the history of the community. This summer, in theatrical performances, dance exhibitions, story-tellings, and other artistic expressions, the Harlem community will come alive in recognizing its rich and beautiful cultural attributes. The accomplishments and history of the African-American cinema will be highlighted alongside a celebration of Jazz and music that has originated in Harlem. Harlem will applaud the history of a diverse community that has struggled with the soul and legacy of generations of Americans.

Harlem Week is also a family event. Children of all ages will be entertained throughout this recognition of the wonder and cultural diversity of Harlem. Petting zoos, story-tellers, fashion shows, and interactive arts—all with an emphasis on achievement and education—will be displayed throughout the events of Harlem.

This year, attendees will also be exposed to the diverse sports and entertainment heritage of Harlem. The National Black Sports & Entertainment Hall of Fame will induct such entertainment luminaries as Phylicia Rashad, Bonnie Raitt, Marian Anderson, Alvin Ailey, Pearl Bailey, Ray Baretto, Donald Byrd, Kenny Gamble, Frankie Crocker, Symphony Sid, and Tito Rodriguez. Sports stars such as John Chaney, Fritz Pollard, Rafer Johnson, Lou Carnesecca, Zina Garrison, Jack Johnson, Elston Howard, Johnny Sample, and Al McGuire will also be inducted in the Hall of Fame.

Harlem Week 2005 promises to be one of the best celebrations of the vitality of the Harlem community this year. It will be an important celebration of the soul of America and the community that has long nurtured that soul. This celebration, exposure, and education of the community will truly be instrumental in understanding and appreciating the beauty of the Harlem community.

As always, I welcome the Members of this Congress, as well as all citizens of these United States of America, to join me and the Harlem community during Harlem Week 2005. You will not regret your time there. I submit for the RECORD the calendar of events for Harlem Week and I look forward to seeing you in Harlem.

HARLEM WEEK 2005: THE LEGACY CONTINUES

NEW YORK'S PREMIERE FESTIVAL CONTINUES TO
CELEBRATE DECADES OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

June 29, 2005 (Harlem, USA)—Back by popular demand, HARLEM WEEK, which celebrates its 31st Anniversary, returns with a